

Burn Area Recovery Task Force (BARTF) Report Los Angeles County October Fire



Image © 2007 DigitalGlobe



Burn Area Recovery Task Force (BARTF) Report Los Angeles County October Fire

Executive Summary

The October Fire was relatively small and burned approximately 30 acres. No threats to human life from post-fire geologic hazards are identified. Some potential threat to public and commercial structures does exist. Two endangered plants exist in the area: California orcutt grass and the Slender-horned spineflower plant. Due to the limited impacts of the fire, no erosion control measures were suggested.

Purpose

This BARTF report is intended to facilitate the effective use of available resources to address threats to public safety, property and infrastructure as a result of the 2007 Southern California wildfires. The October Fire is one of the numerous Southern California wildfires included in the Presidential Disaster Declaration DR-1731-CA. It presents a brief description and assessment of the October Fire impacts, and their potential to jeopardize public safety, infrastructure, or public or private property. There are two possible mechanisms of immediate threat that arose as a result of the fire:

- Potential increased severity of flooding due to higher runoff and velocity from rainfall on burned and denuded slopes; and
- Potential increased debris flows (e.g., mudslides) from rainfall on burned slopes.

This report is based on state and federal Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) report, Post-Fire Hazard Awareness Maps, and meetings with various local, state and federal officials.

Introduction

The October Fire was a low-to-moderate severity fire in Quigley Canyon, along the Placerita Creek. This area is near Santa Clarita. No residential structures exist in the burned area. Although a Los Angeles County Department of Water and Power (LADWP) aqueduct and power lines run through the burned area as well as, some commercial oil company assets which include pipelines and drill rigs, none of these structures appeared to be damaged by the fire. Recovery efforts may have an impact on two endangered plant species normally found in the burned area: the California orcutt grass, and the Slender-Horned spineflower plant. Project-related impacts to these species may require consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Department of Fish and Game (DFG). Environmental permits may be required for many of the proposed projects identified in the BARTF Report. Many of these proposed projects can be completed under emergency conditions or under the waiver process identified in State Executive Order

(S-13-07). Projects that do not fall under these classifications would need to follow the regular permit process (see Environmental Permitting Requirements Appendix).

For any cultural resource concerns refer to the Archaeological Appendix.

The BAER report for the October Fire is included in the BAER Small Fires report. It can be viewed or downloaded from the California Office of Emergency Services web site: www.oes.ca.gov

Background

No watersheds identified.

Analysis

After preliminary assessments by wildlife, engineering and forestry specialists, their evaluation of the October Fire indicates that while LADWP and commercial entities with assets in or near the burned area may prefer to conduct their own more detailed assessment of potential risk of future damages from erosion of the burned area. There appears to be no urgent or compelling risk to human life, property or infrastructure posed by this fire. Due to the limited scale of impacts caused by the fire, no erosion control measures have been suggested.

Potential Emergency Protective Measures

No potential protective measures have been identified.

Potential Funding Sources

| Yes | No | Funding Source |
|------------|-----------|--|
| X | | Local Government |
| X | | California Disaster Assistance Act |
| X | | FEMA Public Assistance (PA) Program |
| X | | Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) |
| | X | Federal Highway Works Administration (FHWA) |
| | X | Department of Interior (DOI) |
| | X | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers |
| | X | Other funding |

Appendices

Appendix A - Environmental Permitting Requirements

Appendix B - Archaeological

Appendix C - Descriptions of State and Federal Program Funding

Appendix E - Preliminary Suggested Projects